

**FEMA PUBLIC NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR
THE MATTE PROPERTY
TEMPORARY SCHOOL SITE
ERATH, VERMILION PARISH, LOUISIANA**

Interested parties are hereby notified that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has prepared a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for a proposed temporary school facility in Erath. The site would provide an educational campus for students whose school buildings sustained major damages from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Presidential Disaster Declarations were signed on August 29, 2005 for Hurricane Katrina (FEMA-1603-DR-LA), and September 24, 2005 for Hurricane Rita (FEMA-1607-DR-LA).

The proposed action involves constructing a temporary school campus in West Erath. The site location is a 40-acre lot known as the Matte Property on the east side of North Road, north of Louisiana Highway 14. The temporary campus would occupy approximately 4.5 acres of the property and would consist of approximately 28 modular structures. Activities would include, where necessary, site grading, gravel road construction, the placement of utilities (electricity, water, and sewer), and the transport and hook-up of the modular structures. Per the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4371 *et seq.*), and associated environmental statutes, a draft EA was written to evaluate the proposed action's potential impacts on the human and natural environment. In order to meet the urgent need for adequate educational facilities in Erath, FEMA has conducted an expedited environmental review process to identify and address environmental issues. The draft EA summarizes the purpose and need, site selection process, affected environment, and potential environmental consequences associated with the proposed action.

Due to the emergency nature of this action, the public comment period will be brief – February 3 to February 5, 2006. Written comments on the draft EA can be faxed to FEMA's Joint Field Office in Baton Rouge at (225) 346-5848 or sent via email to ecomments@dhs.gov. When responding by email, enter code **VE-04** in the subject field. Verbal comments will be accepted at (225) 376-5270 and TTY for hearing or speech-impaired at 800-462-7585 between 8:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M. The draft Environmental Assessment can be viewed and downloaded from FEMA's website at <http://www.fema.gov/ehp/docs.shtm>. It is also available for public review at the FEMA Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) located at 407 Charity Street, Abbeville, LA, and the Vermillion Parish Library located at 405 East St. Victor, Abbeville, LA. The DRC hours are 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Saturday. If no substantive comments are received, the draft EA will become final and this initial Public Notice will also serve as the final Public Notice and as the Final Public Notice for work in the floodplain in accordance with 44 CFR Part 9.12.

All other questions regarding disaster assistance or the availability of emergency housing should be directed to FEMA's Teleregistration line at 800-621-3362.